

**BENSALEM TOWNSHIP COUNCIL  
REORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday  
January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Ed Kisselback  
Joseph Pilieri  
Joseph Knowles  
Michelle Benitez  
Stacey Champion

**SUPPORTING PERSONNEL:**

Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo  
Debora McBreen, Recording Secretary  
Joseph Pizzo, Township Solicitor  
Judge Joseph Falcone  
Judge Michael Gallagher

**PLEASE NOTE:**

**The minutes are not verbatim but rather a synopsis of what transpired during the meeting, and while I do my best to attribute remarks and questions to the correct individual, there may be mistakes or omissions because of the “back and forth” dialogue and the lack of the use of the microphone.**

**1. OPENING OF THE MEETING:**

**Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo** opened the meeting with a moment of silent meditation and/or prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**The Mayor** indicated this was his 30<sup>th</sup> Reorganization meeting and the 27<sup>th</sup> for Councilman Pilieri and Councilman Kisselback.

**The Mayor** introduced Judge Falcone and Judge Gallagher who were on hand to swear in the newly elected and/or re-elected local officials.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

The **Mayor** invited Public Comment on Agenda items, but no one came forward and the first of two public portions was closed.

3. **ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT:**

The **Mayor** called for nominations for **Council President**, **Councilman Pilieri** nominated **Ed Kisselback**, **Councilman Knowles** seconded. The Mayor asked if there were any other nominations, hearing none, the vote carried 5-0.

**Council President Kisselback** thanked Council for having the confidence in him to be Chairman.

**Council President Kisselback** asked for a moment of silence in regards to the tragic incidence that occurred on the football field regarding the Buffalo Bills football player, Damar Hamlin.

4. **ELECTION OF COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT:**

**Council President Kisselback** called for nominations for **Council Vice President**, **Councilwoman Champion** nominated **Councilman Pilieri**, **Councilwoman Benitez** seconded. **Council President Kisselback** asked if there were any other nominations, hearing none, the vote carried 5-0.

5. **ELECTION OF TOWNSHIP SECRETARY:**

**Council President Kisselback** called for nominations for **Township Secretary**. **Council Vice President Pilieri** nominated **Joe Knowles**, **Councilwoman Champion** seconded. **Council President Kisselback** asked if there were any other nominations, hearing none, the vote carried 5-0.

6. **ELECTION OF THE ASSISTANT TOWNSHIP SECRETARY:**

**Council President Kisselback** indicated the **Mayor** recommended **Debbie McBreen** for the **Assistant Township Secretary**, **Council Vice President Pilieri** motioned to approve, **Council Secretary Knowles** seconded and the vote carried 5-0.

7. **APPOINTMENT OF MUNICIPAL CLERK:**

**Council President Kisselback** indicated the **Mayor** recommended **Debbie McBreen** for **Municipal Clerk** pursuant to Section 2-26 of the Code. **Council Vice President Pilieri** motioned to approve, **Councilwoman Benitez** seconded and the vote carried 5-0.

8. **APPOINTMENT OF A CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM TO EXAMINE ALL TOWNSHIP ACCOUNTS FOR 2023:**

The **Mayor** recommended **Maillie, LLP** as the accounting firm. **Councilwoman Benitez** motioned to approve, **Council Vice President Pilieri** seconded and the vote carried 5-0.

9. **DESIGNATION OF AN OFFICIAL DEPOSITORY FOR TOWNSHIP FUNDS DURING 2023:**

The Mayor recommended *Penn Community Bank*, Council Vice President Pileri motioned to approve, Council Secretary Knowles seconded and the vote carried 4-0-1.

10. **DESIGNATION OF BENSLEM TOWNSHIP'S NEWS MEDIA FOR LEGAL ADVERTISING DURING 2023:**

The Mayor recommended the *Bucks County Courier Times*. Councilwoman Benitez motioned to approve and Councilwoman Champion seconded, the vote carried 5-0.

11. **DESIGNATION OF MONTHLY MEETING DATES DURING 2022:**

Council President Kisselback discussed the meeting dates. Solicitor Pizzo indicated the September meeting date of the 25<sup>th</sup> was a Jewish Holiday. The date of the second meeting in September was removed. Council Vice President Pileri motioned to approve the meeting dates for 2023, Councilwoman Benitez seconded and the vote carried 5-0.

Council President Kisselback asked for a motion to move Agenda Item 24, the Veterans Advisory Board. Council Vice President Pileri motioned for agenda item 24 to be moved to Agenda Item 11A, Council Secretary Knowles seconded and the vote carried 5-0.,

11A. **VETERANS AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Richard Clift, Joe DeFranco, Patrick Jones, Jim Pinto, Bruce Siemers, Joe Slemmer and Joe Trucks* to serve a 1-year term. Council Vice President Pileri motioned to approve, Councilwoman Benitez seconded and the vote carried 5-0. Judge Falcone swore in 7 members.

12. **CODE OF APPEALS BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Nancy McCarty* for a 3-year term. Councilwoman Benitez motioned to approve and Councilwoman Champion seconded, the vote carried 5-0. The member was not in attendance.

13. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Steve Aldrich, Ernesto Veneziale* and *Marc Winokur* for a 1-year term. Council Secretary Knowles motioned to approve and Councilwoman Benitez seconded, the vote carried 5-0. No members were in attendance.

14. **DISABLED ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Loreen Cimino, Matt Neiman, Joelle Pileri, Phyllis Pisch, Nick Quattrone and James Wright* for a 1-year term. Council Vice President Pileri motioned to

approve and **Councilwoman Champion** seconded, the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in 1 member.

**15. DRUG AND ALCOHOL ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Rosemarie Angle, Maura Champion, Francis Curran, Lisa Diasio, Rita D'Angelo, Julianna Johnson, Emmanuel Jones, Mary Ann Griffin, Jean Pawlowski, George Seymour, Gary Kisselback and Bernadette Kisselback* for a 1-year term. **Councilwoman Benitez** motioned to approve, **Council Vice President Pilieri** seconded, and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Gallagher** swore in 9 members.

**16. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION:**

The Mayor recommended for a 3-year term *John Costello, Al Gougler, Jim Humphreys, Rich Speeney and Steve Noll will finish out Bob Braubitz's term which ends 12/31/24*. **Councilwoman Champion** motioned to approve and **Councilwoman Benitez** seconded, the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Gallagher** swore in 1 member.

**17. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Don Anderson, Ron Harris, Edward Cooper, David Marshall, Bill McVey, Lance Morell, Joseph Pilieri, Robert Race, Robert Sponheimer, John Chaykowski, and Ken Farrall* for a 1-year term. **Council Secretary Knowles** motioned to approve, **Councilwoman Benitez** seconded and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in 7 members.

**18. ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Ed Penszak* to finish Heidrun Malone's term which ends 12/31/24. **Councilwoman Benitez** motioned to approve, **Council Vice President Pilieri** seconded and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Gallagher** swore in 1 member.

**19. GAMING ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Walter Arch, Sandra Rogers, Mary Ann Griffin, Nandish Patel, Sunny Patel, Donna Patti, and Mike Gallagher* for a 1-year term. **Council Secretary Pilieri** motioned to approve, **Councilwoman Benitez** seconded and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in 4 members.

**20. IMPACT FEE ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Wayne Lewis, Mary Ellen Cook, Deepak Dhawan, Tom Nevrotski, Frank Paine and Ramesh Patel* for a 1-year term. **Councilwoman Benitez** motioned to approve, **Council Secretary Knowles** seconded and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Gallagher** swore in 1 member.

21. **PLANNING COMMISSION:**

The **Mayor** recommended *Ed Devenney and Frank Schilling* for a 4-year term. **Council Vice President Pilieri** motioned to approve, **Councilwoman Benitez** seconded and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in 1 member.

22. **SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD:**

The **Mayor** recommended *Buzz Ebner, Robert Gale, Alice Gresko and Barbara Carter* for a 1-year term. **Councilwoman Champion** motioned to approve, **Councilwoman Benitez** seconded and the vote carried 5-0. No members were in attendance.

23. **VACANT PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD:**

The **Mayor** recommended *William Cmorey, Jeffrey Darwak and Al Gougler* for a 1-year term. **Council Vice President Pilieri** motioned to approve, **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the vote carried 5-0. No members were in attendance.

24. **VETERANS AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD:**

Moved to agenda item 11A.

25. **ZONING HEARING BOARD:**

The **Mayor** recommended *Harry Kramer* for a 5-year term. **Council Vice President Pilieri** motioned to approve, **Council Secretary Knowles** seconded and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Gallagher** swore in 1 member.

26. **SUPPORT PERSONNEL:**

**Solicitor Pizzo:** Reviewed the Council meeting dates and indicated the Council meeting for September 25<sup>th</sup> is the last day of Yom Kippur and recommended that date be changed. Council President Kisselback removed the September 25<sup>th</sup> Council meeting date.

**Mayor DiGirolamo:** The Mayor wished everyone a Happy New Year. Thanked Council for their support. Thanked all of the volunteers on the Mayor's Boards. Council President Kisselback thanked the Mayor for all of his years of service to the Bensalem community.

**Council President Kisselback:** Thanked Judge Falcone and Judge Gallagher for initiating the swearing in process.

**Councilwoman Benitez:** Wished everyone a Happy New Year. Thanked all the volunteers on the various Boards. January 15<sup>th</sup> is the kick-off for Unity Week.

**Council Vice President Pilieri:** Wished everyone a Happy New Year. Thanked the Police Department and the Fire Department for all the good they do to protect all of the citizens of Bensalem.

**Council Secretary Knowles:** Wished everyone a Happy New Year. Unity Week is a good way to start the year and a nice way to experience other cultures and faiths. Thanked all Council members for their support while he was the Council President and congratulated Mr. Kisselback on being Council President. Congratulated Ms. Benitez and Ms. Champion for a wonderful first year on the Board.

**Councilwoman Champion:** Wished everyone a Happy New Year. Prayers to everyone having issues, especially to the Buffalo Bills football player and his family. Thanked all of the volunteers on the Mayor's Boards.

**Council President Kisselback:** January 9<sup>th</sup> is the next Council meeting. January 15<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup> is Diversity and Unity Week. Wished everyone a Happy New Year. Thanked all the volunteers on the various Mayor's Boards. Thanked Joe Knowles for the great job he did as Council President. Thanked the other members of Council for their support.

27. **PUBLIC COMMENT;**

**Council President Kisselback** asked if there was anyone in the audience who would like to make a comment. Seeing no one come forward, the second of two Public Comments was closed

28. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned.

The Bensalem Township Reorganization Council Meeting of January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023 can be viewed in its entirety at the following websites:

[www.bensalempa.gov](http://www.bensalempa.gov)

or

[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Debora F. McBreen  
Recording Secretary**